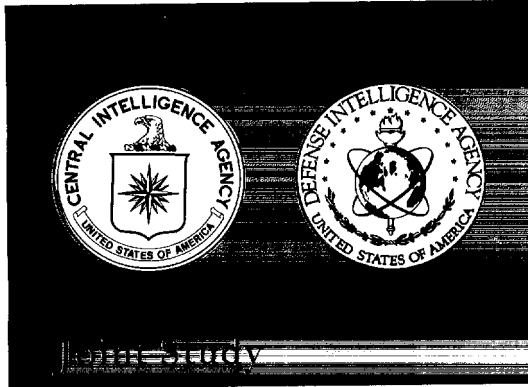


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Communist Violations of the Vietnam and Laos Settlement Agreements and Related Developments

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12 December 1973

Forty-Second Report**COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF THE VIETNAM AND LAOS
SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS***

(This report covers the week
from 5 December through 11 December 1973)

The Key Points

- The flow of regular infiltration groups to South Vietnam has resumed after a one-week standdown.
- After increasing markedly last week, logistic activity continued to be very heavy in the panhandles of North Vietnam and Laos. Substantial volumes of ammunition were noted moving in southern North Vietnam.
- Hanoi is increasing its air defense forces in northern South Vietnam.

* This report has been prepared jointly by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense.



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Preface

This report is the forty-second in a series summarizing evidence received during the reporting period of (I) Communist efforts to infiltrate new manpower and military supplies toward and into South Vietnam, (II) Communist-initiated combat activity in violation of the Vietnam and Laos settlement agreements, and (III) other developments affecting Communist military capabilities in Indochina.

DETAILS

I. Infiltration and Redeployments of North Vietnamese Personnel and Military Supplies

Personnel Infiltration and Redeployments

1. After a hiatus of a week, Hanoi has resumed troop infiltration to South Vietnam. Between 5 and 11 December, three new regular combat groups destined for the lower half of the country were detected in North Vietnam and one new group en route to the western highlands was observed in the Laotian Panhandle. Also, one regular group previously included in our estimate was detected going to southern Laos or its adjacent border areas.

2. The detection of the above groups tends to confirm the validity of the North Vietnamese message intercepted on 11 November which forecast substantial increases in troop infiltration to the western highlands and southern South Vietnam. At this point, however, the North Vietnamese are not making an all-out effort to send infiltrators south as fast as the system permits. A number of groups detected in recent weeks have been held at way stations in North Vietnam for several days before starting south.

3. The inclusion of four of the regular groups noted above results in a net increase of 2,000 in the number of troops starting south since 1 September 1973. Total troop infiltration since then, however, is some 8,000 fewer than during the comparable period a year ago. Only 25% of the troops infiltrated since 1 September 1973 have been earmarked for combat units in South Vietnam, compared with more than 75% in the comparable period last year.

Comparative Starts of Troops from North Vietnam, by Destination 1 September - 11 December

	1972	1973
Total	38,000	30,000
MR Tri-Thien-Hue	11,000	2,000
MR 5	5,000	2,000
B-3 Front	4,500	1,000
COSVN	8,500	2,500
Southern Laos/MR 559	9,000	22,500

Movement of Military Equipment and Supplies

North Vietnam

4. Following last week's pattern, logistic activity in the North Vietnamese Panhandle was again heavy. Binh Trams (BT) 8 and 26, the major units handling supply shipments through the Vinh and Dong Hoi areas of southern North Vietnam, were detected handling large amounts of ordnance (see Map 562332). On 5 and 6 December, BT 8 shipped more than 150 tons of ammunition southward from storage depots. Several days later, on 9 December, it sent another 180 tons of ammunition and had 140 tons of ammunition remaining in storage, including some 115 tons of 130-mm field artillery ammunition. The next day it received an additional 45 tons of ammunition, including another 20 tons of 130-mm ammunition. These shipments are undoubtedly part of the 3,800-4,000 tons of arms and ammunition scheduled to move through the BT 8 area during the month (see last week's report) and probably will be transshipped into southern Laos.

5. Farther south, in the BT 26 (Dong Hoi) area, a similar level of activity was noted. On 6 December, BT 26 received nearly 100 tons of ordnance and sent more than 150 tons. On the same day, an intercept from BT 26 revealed that it had sent 118 trucks. Although some activity was noted after this date, a heavy rain storm on 8 December reportedly hampered supply shipments in the area.

Southern Laos

6. The heavy surge of southbound truck traffic detected in photography [] along the central sections of the new dual-lane route through southern Laos has continued. Photographic missions [] revealed clusters and convoys of trucks totaling several hundred vehicles parked or heading north and south between the Muong Nong and Ban Phone areas. This photography also showed that some of the trucks are now proceeding south toward the tri-border exit routes leading into Kontum Province, South Vietnam. Northbound traffic was somewhat greater this week than last, although most of the trucks observed were heading south. The repeated sightings of hundreds of southbound trucks along the same new route segments south of Muong Nong suggest that many additional trucks entered this area during the week or that the same trucks are making many round trips between staging areas. In this connection, intercepts of 9 and 11 December from an NVA logistic unit in the southern Laotian Panhandle reported that 550 vehicles had entered its area of operation and an additional 500 were scheduled to arrive during an



unspecified period. Vehicle activity along some areas of the dual-lane road, however, is still being hampered because of the effects of recent poor weather.

7. Some of the activity noted in photography and COMINT may be related to the movement of an NVA unit – probably a transportation regiment – into Laos from North Vietnam. Plans for the movement of this unit were first noted on 5 December when elements of the 14th Engineering Regiment, responsible for logistic activity from the Ban Karai Pass to northern South Vietnam, reported that 251 vehicles with a "36th Regiment" would be transiting its area. Two days later, COMINT indicated that elements of this regiment had reached nearly as far as Ban Bac in Laos and were continuing south. The final destination of the regiment is unknown, but it probably will be involved in the movement of supplies through Laos or in construction activity within South Vietnam this dry season.

South Vietnam

8. Supply movement through northern South Vietnam was light again last week, but there were indications that activity would pick up shortly. On 7 December a logistic unit near Dong Ha was ordered to repair a section of Route 9 "to facilitate the handling of 240 vehicles and two battalions of men." The next day a road status report from a logistic unit indicated that most of Route 9 was generally passable but that travel along the western supply corridor was severely restricted by muddy roads. Although the movement of supplies down the Communists' new supply corridor in South Vietnam probably will be very difficult in the weeks ahead because of heavy rains, the North Vietnamese may intend to move supplies westward along Route 9 into southern Laos, where the dry season has just begun. Once in Laos, supplies could then be shipped southward along those segments of the Communists' new dual-lane road that are completed.

II. Communist-Initiated Combat Activity in South Vietnam and Laos

South Vietnam

9. In South Vietnam the total number of Communist-initiated cease-fire violations reported by the South Vietnamese Armed Forces since 27 January, since 15 June, and for the last week (5-11 December) are shown below:

Military Region	Total Since 27 January Cease-Fire		Total Since 15 June Cease-Fire		Last Week (5-11 Dec)	
	Major	Minor	Major	Minor	Major	Minor
Total	4,172	26,990	1,803	13,035	50 (93)¹	519 (614)¹
MR 1	1,498	5,464	473	2,105	8	71
MR 2	696	4,500	432	2,646	16	75
MR 3	629	4,787	227	2,211	8	112
MR 4	1,349	12,239	671	6,073	18	261

1. Figures in parentheses denote totals of the previous week.

10. Some of these violations may have been initiated by South Vietnamese forces rather than Communist forces, and it is impossible in all cases to determine the actual instigator. The tabulation above and the charts following the Annex, however, show fairly accurately the trend in the amount of combat that has occurred in South Vietnam since the cease-fire. The fact that a combat incident occurred at a particular time and place is generally reported accurately by the South Vietnamese, even though the question of who started it may not always be treated objectively.

11. Fighting continued in Quang Duc Province of Military Region 2 during the week. ARVN reinforced the provincial capital of Gia Nghia on 5 and 6 December with the 45th Regiment of the 23rd Division. ARVN forces have reoccupied the town of Kien Duc, which had fallen to the Communists on the 5th. Current enemy activity consists of limited ground probes and attacks-by-fire.

Laos

12. There was no significant military activity in Laos last week.

III. Other Developments Affecting Communist Military Capabilities in Indochina

Hanoi Enhances Air Defense in Northern South Vietnam

13. COMINT of early December has indicated that a new North Vietnamese antiaircraft regiment -- the 45th -- has been formed in northern South Vietnam and another -- the 232nd -- is scheduled to deploy there from southern Laos later this month. Both regiments will support

Communist rear service operations in western Quang Nam and Quang Tin Provinces. Formed in part from elements of the Laos-based 595th Antiaircraft Regiment, the 45th Regiment has at least two subordinate battalions. The 232nd Regiment, which has three battalions, will probably be replaced in southern Laos by the NVA 595th Antiaircraft Regiment, which is now moving south from Savannakhet Province to Saravane Province (see last week's report).

14. The creation of the 45th and the shift of the 232nd will bring to 23 the total number of North Vietnamese antiaircraft regiments deployed within South Vietnam – the highest ever. These developments indicate that Hanoi probably intends to provide antiaircraft protection to its logistic forces along Communist Route 14, from the western DMZ all the way south to Pleiku Province in the central highlands. Map 515529 shows the current distribution of Communist and South Vietnamese combat forces, by military region, and reflects the addition of the 45th Regiment to the VC/NVA order of battle for MR 1.

Communist and South Vietnamese Regular Combat Forces in South Vietnam

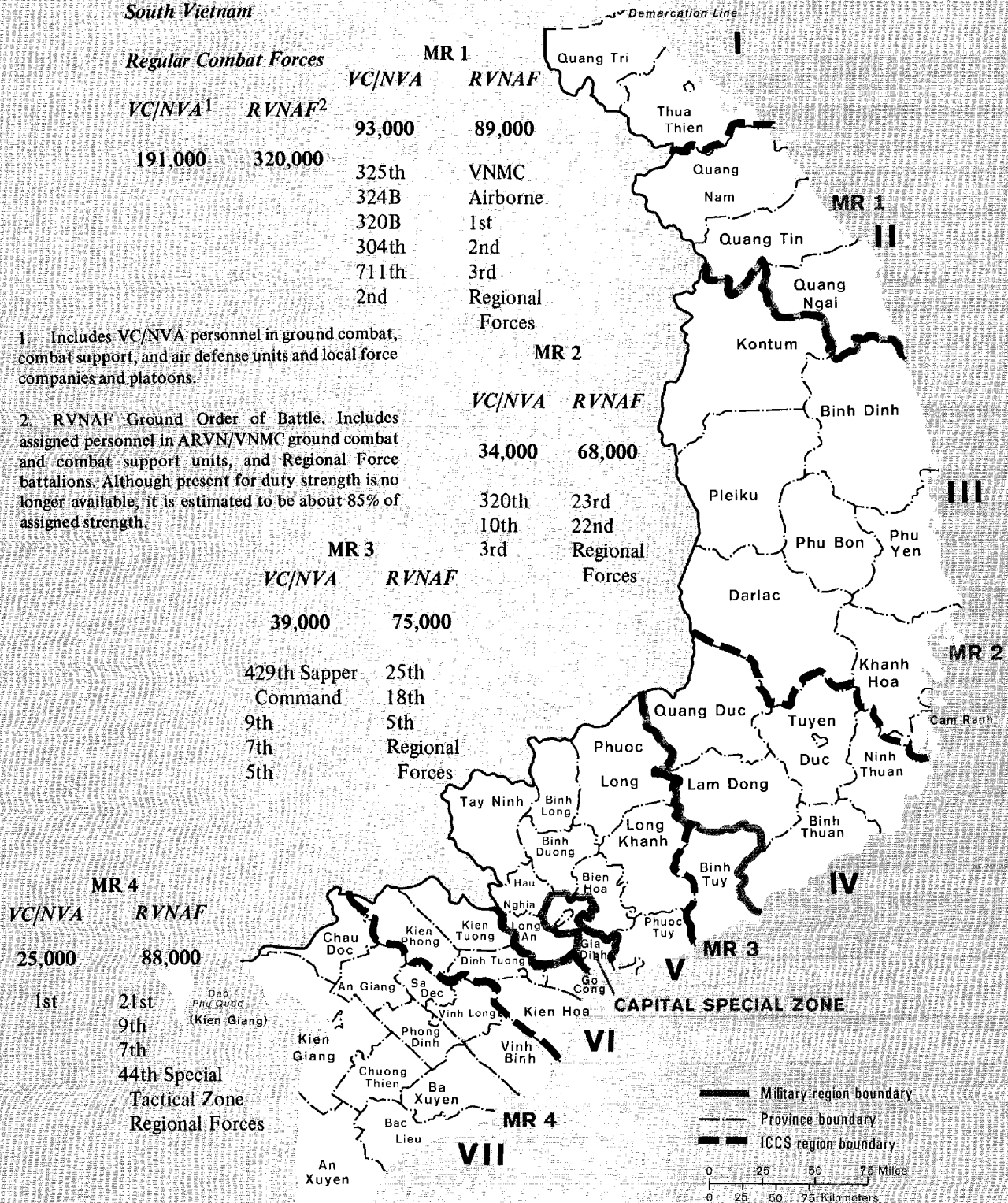
South Vietnam

Regular Combat Forces

VC/NVA ¹	RVNAF ²	VC/NVA	RVNAF
191,000	320,000	93,000	89,000
		325th	VNMC
		324B	Airborne
		320B	1st
		304th	2nd
		711th	3rd
		2nd	Regional Forces

1. Includes VC/NVA personnel in ground combat, combat support, and air defense units and local force companies and platoons.

2. RVNAF Ground Order of Battle. Includes assigned personnel in ARVN/VNMC ground combat and combat support units, and Regional Force battalions. Although present for duty strength is no longer available, it is estimated to be about 85% of assigned strength.



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ANNEX

INFILTRATION OF NORTH VIETNAMESE PERSONNEL
TO THE SOUTH

1. Five regular infiltration groups were initially detected during the past week - 2032, 2033, 2034, 3007, and 5101. The first three of these groups were detected in the Binh Tram (BT) 8 area near Vinh, and the last two were noted moving south in the Laotian Panhandle. Because Group 5101 was previously "gap-filled," it has not been added to last week's starts. Groups 2032, 2033, and 2034 have been incorporated in the total infiltration starts for December, while Group 3007 has been added to November's figures.

2. Since the 15 June "second cease-fire," almost 38,000 North Vietnamese have infiltrated southward, including nearly 36,000 combat troops and over 2,000 specialists. Since the 27 January agreement, about 88,000 personnel have infiltrated southward, including almost 80,000 combat troops and more than 8,000 specialists. Some 63,000 have started south since 27 January, while 25,000 were in the pipeline moving southward as of that date. The following table shows the number of North Vietnamese infiltrators starting south, by month and destination, since 1 January 1973.

**Number of Troops Entering the Pipeline Destined
for South Vietnam, Southern Laos, and Cambodia
Since 1 January 1973¹**

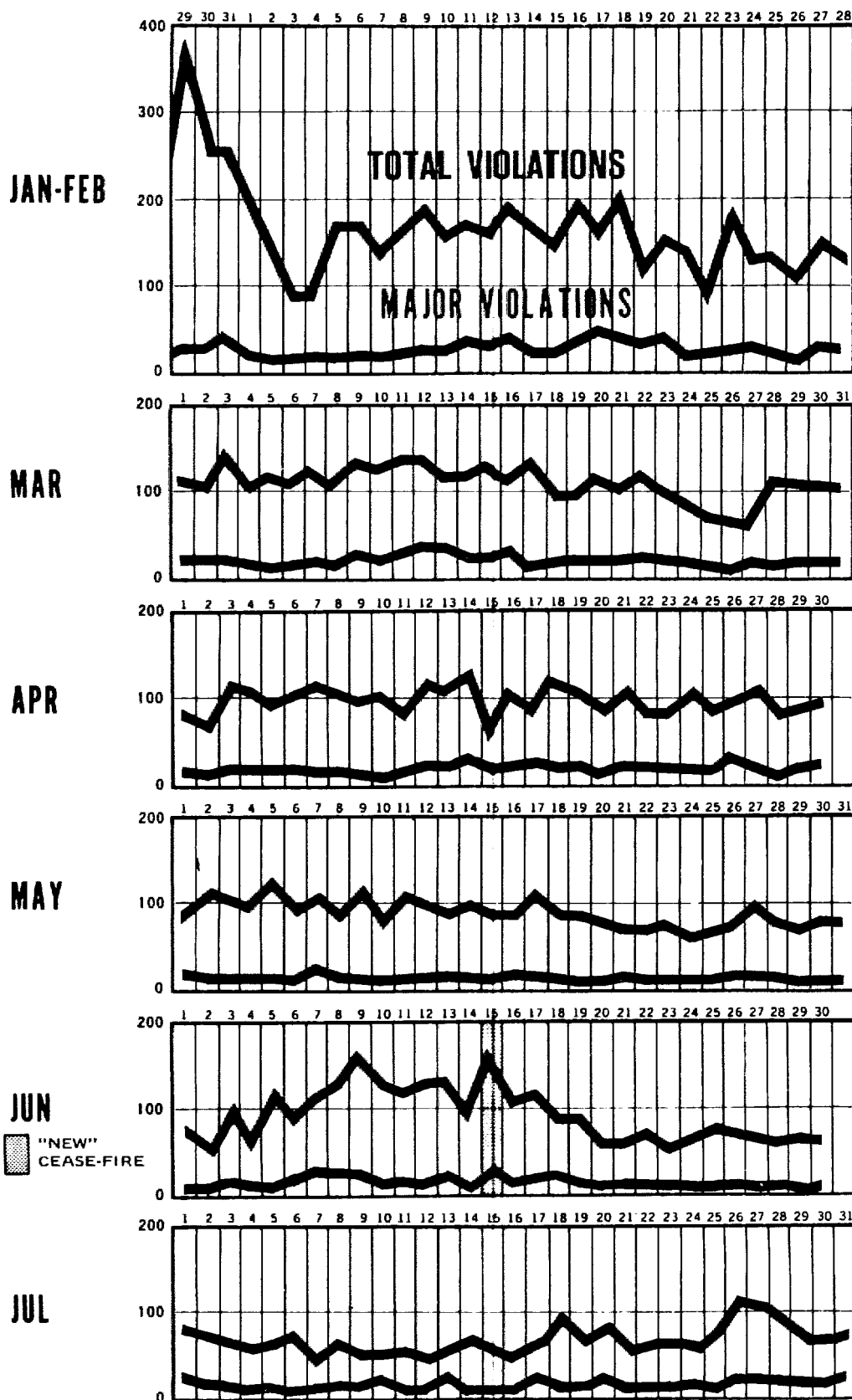
	COSVN	B-3 Front	MR 5	MR Tri-Thien-Hue	Southern Laos/ MR 559	Total
Total	15,500	6,500	9,000	14,000	26,500	71,500
Jan	7,000	5,000	4,000	2,500	....	18,500
Feb	5,000	500	....	1,500	1,000	8,000
Mar	....	....	....	1,000	....	1,000
Apr	1,000	....	....	....	....	1,000
May	....	....	....	7,000	....	7,000
Jun	....	....	....	....	1,500	1,500
Jul	....	....	3,000	....	....	3,000
Aug	....	....	....	....	1,500	1,500
Sep	....	....	2,000	2,000	3,000	7,000
Oct	....	....	....	....	14,000	14,000
Nov	1,000	1,000	....	....	5,500	7,500
Dec 1-11	1,500	....	....	....	....	1,500

1. Excludes special-purpose personnel. The totals are rounded to the nearest 500.



CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM AS REPORTED BY RVNAF

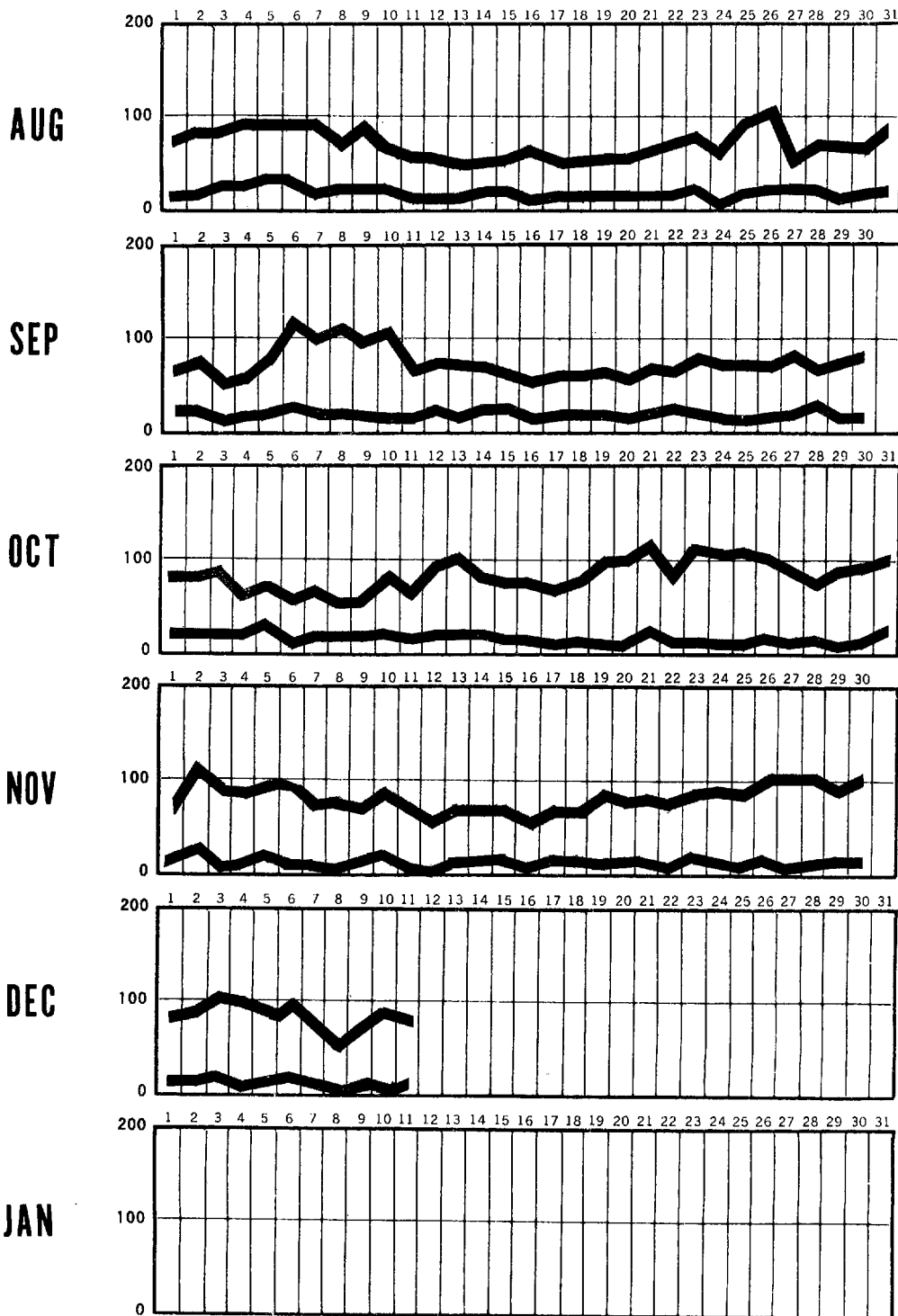
(28 JANUARY THROUGH 31 JULY 1973)





CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM AS REPORTED BY RVNAF

(1 AUGUST 1973 TO THE PRESENT)



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